

THE CASE OF THE TRAMWAY MEN.

THE National Conference of Tramway Workers which assembled at Birmingham at the end of last week marks a distinct advance in the organisation of this branch of unskilled labour. It is, however, significant of the spirit of the "New Unionism" that this "nationalisation" of the Trade Union is, in the present case, regarded rather as an instrument for the education of town councillors and Parliamentary candidates than as the weapon of a strike. A universal tramway strike could, indeed, be nothing but the last outcome of despair—the English analogue of the Hindoo creditor voluntarily starving himself on his debtor's doorstep. Long as are the hours of the tramway conductor, his normal pay of three or four shillings a day would be sufficient to attract a crowd of what the Australian capitalist press euphemistically terms "freemen," whose "freedom" to work excessive hours coerces the existing staff to do the same. London and the decaying rural villages, the docks and the casual ward, always contain enough "out of works" and restless spirits who could be bribed on to the lines even for long hours. Few of them would be able to keep up a steady sixteen hours' day for any length of time, but meanwhile the back of the strike would have been fatally broken. In the case of absolutely unskilled employment, proficiency in which can be acquired in one trial trip, the old weapon of the Trade Unionist breaks in his hand.

In the case of the tramway servant the main instrument of the New Unionist is equally useless. Mrs. Besant won the humble victory of the match girls through the power of public sympathy, through a wave of the "passion of pity" that swept for a moment over all classes alike.

The dockers triumphed under Messrs. Burns, Tillet, and Mann because public opinion in the blackleg's own class made him a moral leper, and the Australians bribed him to virtue with a shilling a day. In these cases no obvious inconvenience was caused to the great mass of the people. Matches were still to be bought for next to nothing in the streets while Bryant and May's girls were "at play." Tea did not rise in price, sugar did not disappear from the grocers' shops, the sale of rum continued to excite Mr. Goschen's pleased surprise, throughout the whole cloudless three months of John Burns' stirring orations on Tower Hill. But the stoppage of London's tramway service would mean the daily discomfort of millions. The huge cities of workmen's dwellings which have lately grown up all round London depend largely for very existence on their tramway communications with the centre. The dense masses who morning and evening throng the cars of the City Road and the Elephant and Castle, or the great arteries of traffic penetrating into Peckham or Brixton, would be hard put to it to reach their employment in time if the trams were stopped by the pickets. The millions to whom on Sundays the tramway furnishes a means of escape from the grimy city would be equally embittered. The spirit of solidarity is now strong enough among the workers to ensure a formal support of a tram strike by every Trade Union in the kingdom. But it would not be in human nature cordially to endure, day after day, the very serious trouble which a general "tie up" of the London tramways must inevitably create. In such circumstances even the strongest Union would be powerless.

Yet the grievances of the tramway servants are precisely of that specific and definite character which we all, nowadays, regard as justifying even the *ultima ratio* of the industrial conflict. Whatever we think of the Eight Hours' Day, no one—not even a tramway

shareholder—can be found to defend a Sixteen Hours' Day. Magistrate after magistrate has denounced from the Bench the grossly tyrannical conditions of the contract of service into which these "free citizens" enter. The fines and other arbitrary exactions to which they "voluntarily" submit are only saved from absolute illegality by the imperfect drafting of the Truck Act. The persistent efforts of philanthropists, the repeated attacks of the pulpit and the press, have failed to produce any appreciable effect on the shareholders' consciences. The man who can expect the "moralisation," in their business capacity, of a board of tramway directors must now, indeed, seem an optimistic visionary beside whom the authors of "Looking Backward" or the "Fabian Essays" are but sober prophets of an early day.

It is not that the tramway industry pays badly. During the last twenty years more and more capital has been steadily attracted to this branch of locomotion, and the mileage open has, since 1880, nearly trebled. The statistics quoted at Birmingham were, as is usual with round numbers, somewhat exaggerated, but the Board of Trade returns for 1889 show total receipts, for 949 miles of line, of £2,980,224, against working expenses of £2,266,681, leaving a net profit on the year's working of £713,543. This amounts to an average of over five and a quarter per cent. on the entire capital, or an average dividend on the share capital of about six per cent. This average marks, however, some very big dividends in the larger companies, off-set by lower rates in other cases where the stock has been unduly "watered," or otherwise manipulated. The most important company, and in many ways the worst offender of them all, is the "North Metropolitan," which owns one-third of the London mileage, and serves the greater part of the Metropolis north of the Thames. This Leviathan, with its 350 licensed cars, has for years paid a dividend of between nine and ten per cent. The remainder of London's tramway communication is divided among ten smaller companies, who make, notwithstanding their disputes and unnecessary divisions, an average profit of about five per cent on their entire nominal capital.

The fact is that the long hours and general ill-treatment in the tramway service are really a part of its character as a new industry. The coal-miners, in the early development of England's main source of mineral wealth, suffered quite as many grievances as the tramway conductors. The horrors of the white slavery which made the fortunes of Lancashire have become terribly familiar to us. The reckless sacrifice of seamen's lives that marked the first expansion of the world's commerce is less widely known, though no less real. In all these cases we have slowly built up a wall of protection of the weak against the worst excesses of the strong. By a series of reactions of public opinion upon law, and then of the law upon public opinion; of Trade Unions securing legislative help, and that legislation further helping Trade Union action; the coal-hewers and the textile operatives have been raised from their degradation and placed among the very aristocracy of labour. In other trades where the "Labour Code" is less effective, the social improvement has been less marked. Especially is this backwardness noticeable in the industries which are still relatively in an early stage of development, as is the case also in those Continental countries which are only just beginning to imitate our legislative action. The worst horrors of the so-called "sweating system" in the tailoring and some other trades are the accompaniment of their slow passage from the "small" to the "great" industry. The recent

colliery strikes in Belgium revealed a condition of unrestrained competitive horrors only to be matched in "Germinal," or the scarcely less telling pages of the reports of the Royal Commissions prior to the Mines Regulation Act. The tramway service in 1890 is still in its infancy, and is, moreover, as completely unregulated by law as Lancashire was before the Factory Act, or Northumberland before 1842.

It is, however, probable that the tramways will pass almost directly into the stage of "municipalisation," without lingering in that of mere public regulation. Over thirty municipalities already own the lines within their respective districts, and public opinion appears to be running rapidly in this direction. It is well known that the London County Council is inclined to take over the Metropolitan lines as the statutory concessions expire, and the first of these runs out next year. Public ownership, even without public administration, already enables the Glasgow Corporation to insist on a maximum ten hours' day for its tramway workers, ensured by a stipulation in its lease of the lines. But direct public administration at Huddersfield goes a step further, the tramway employes of the Huddersfield Town Council enjoying already an eight hours' day. Here is one practical method by which the wage-earners, as municipal electors, can secure their ends by less barbarous methods than industrial war. Where industry is carried on, not for private profit, but for the public convenience, it is obviously for the collective public to determine the conditions of employment. A labour revolt against a town council elected by a labour vote is an obvious absurdity. In all such cases the ballot box logically replaces the strike, and industrial peace, no longer tottering in the unstable equilibrium of the "labour war," rests at last securely "broad based upon the people's will," which even the most turbulent of industrial demagogues learns not to gainsay.

CHURCH BY TELEPHONE.

IT is not a new idea, as the daily newspapers seem to imagine, to bring the services of the church into our homes by means of the telephone. Years ago Mr. Louis Crossley, of Halifax, established this medium between his house and a chapel, and Dr. Talmage is said to have been anxious at one time to use the same machinery of ministration between his pulpit in New York and the sick-beds of the faithful. In America there is a pre-eminent genius for adapting mechanical inventions to multifarious uses; but, so far as we know, though the telephone is employed by Americans to an extent unimagined in this country, though it ministers in various ways to the loquacity and convenience of the most talkative race in the world, though it serves to call a cab, or spread a scandal, or give the signal for a *coup* in Wall Street, it is not the thread which enables the human spirit, wandering Theseus-like in the dark labyrinth of worldly guile, to find its way back to safety and daylight. We hear much of the conversation which can be carried on by telephone over great distances. London can talk with Manchester. A provincial listener can enjoy an opera which is performed in a metropolitan theatre. In "Looking Backward" Mr. Bellamy thoughtfully provides the people who have the good fortune to live a hundred years hence, with the best music, which can be turned on by telephone as easily as gas. But, apparently, our posterity do not care to hear sermons in the same way. To-day, nobody suggests that the discussions of the Church Congress ought to be poured into every civilised home like

water from the main. That is a pity, for the annual exercises of the ecclesiastical mind might be much better appreciated if they could be conveyed in their original tones straight to the ear of a careless but curious public. In the library of every educated citizen there is a judicious assortment of literature, a delicate division between the spiritual and the profane—a distinction which enables the mind to turn to the particular shelf for the precise stimulus which it needs at the moment. But consider how admirably this responsible office of discrimination might be performed by the telephone! Turning to a number of discs marked respectively, let us say, "Serious," "Sportive," and "Miscellaneous," the citizen might find relief from every care that besets him. The sordid worries of business might be dissipated by the last comic song, the pressure of domestic distractions relieved by a scene from the Lyceum or the Garrick, the stings of speculative unrest checked by the eloquent optimism of the pulpit.

But here the regular church-goer will interpose with a serious difficulty. It is not too easy in these times to induce men to attend a place of worship. Many who go are taken there by the affectionate discipline of their womankind; and any excuse for wandering from this path of spiritual excellence is eagerly and furtively snatched at by the domestic backslider. We are afraid that religious instruction by telephone would scarcely commend itself to the gentle guardians of the household, who would not sit in the family pew with any solid conviction that husband, son, or brother was listening at home with serious attention to the inspiring sounds from church. And, indeed, those sounds might seem too distant to be actual. The eye—that incorrigible absentee—might easily be tempted to wander to the entertaining novel or the absorbing Sunday journal. Nature herself would conspire against the preacher, and the panorama from the windows would teem with suggestions, against which the pulpit echoes might struggle in vain. Then the listener would probably smoke, and tobacco has a habit of starting trains of thought and fancy absolutely foreign to the task in hand. Goodness knows what images of scepticism might not frame themselves in the curling vapour, like the goblin who came out of the box in the Arabian tale. Above all, the mastering influence of the preacher's personality would be lost. Who would have cared to hear Liddon by telephone? What imagination could picture the glow of conviction which inspired the orator, and caught the spirit of the congregation like an encircling flame? How could the telephone fill the mind with the atmosphere of an imposing fane, or the charm of the simplest tabernacle? Few of us have such power of concentration that we can engage in the act of worship without the co-operation of all the faculties, and the response of physical as well as spiritual fibre to the touch of a large assemblage. The average man is not made of the stuff of hermits. He cannot lose himself in solitary contemplation. He needs the restraint of decorum in a consecrated place as well as the stimulus of the general devotion. Left to the care of the telephone, his attention would wander like a child's, and the first knock at the street door would be hailed as a relief instead of being reprobated as an intrusion.

On the other hand, we can conceive that church by telephone might be a spiritual influence of singular potency. On the comfort it would bring to the bedside of the dying we need not dwell. To them there is almost sufficient ministration in the imminence of the great enlightenment. But to the man who has laboured all the week, and to whom even Sunday brings no absolute rest, there might be some soothing

magic in the melody of praise, and the solemnity of exhortation, stealing in upon his hour of mental toil. Then he might be carried back to those early, happier days when the complexities of life had not perplexed his thought, and when the harmonies of worship, however conventional, had attuned his fancy. He might call up the figure of the teacher who first quickened his sense of the moral beauty of religion without piercing his reason with the asperities of ecclesiastical dogma. Once more the simple tenets of the Christian faith, unclouded by the perversity of priestly ambition, unmangled by the wars of sects, no longer mocked by the crimes of persecution, nor scarred by the irony of history, might resume their sway over his mind. That sentiment of reverence which is the flower of the soul might bloom again. Newman has some words of subdued scorn in one of his sermons for the typical religion of the Englishman, who regards the Church of England as a national institution, and is satisfied if solemn things are treated with decorum. But this simply means that no power will ever envelope the majority of our people in the complications of a dogmatic belief so saturated with earthly alloy that its inspiration is manifestly more political than divine, the outcome of centuries of ecclesiastical statecraft, and not of the teaching in Galilee. No controversy of this kind need torment the man who listens in his own room to the service of devotion which is celebrated in church or chapel. He is free from that strain on the gravity which is imposed by parsons who have mistaken their vocation, who expound an empty formula, or exalt some eccentricity of outward observance at the expense of real emotion. Above all, he can cut himself off at the right moment from forms which have become meaningless by repetition, or from extemporaneous musings which are the reverberations of vacancy. How many of us would often give much if the whole service in church were suddenly suspended, so that we might ponder in silence one or two words which have penetrated the innermost recesses of our souls! It would be a blessing to still the telephone at such a crisis, or to turn off the sermon which threatened to be prosy. But we suspect that these advantages would not be convincing on the whole to the clergy of any denomination, and that by some the telephone would even be regarded as the evil instrument of an anarchic agitation against pew-rents.

THE BENWELL MURDER.

THERE is every element of sensation in the singular trial which was concluded at Woodstock, in Ontario, this week. The mystery surrounding the fate of the murdered man, the dramatic incidents connected with it, the position of the accused, the ingenious perfidy of the crime alleged, the conduct of the trial, the mobs in court, the jaunty callousness of the prisoner (who sat sketching the audience about him), the multitudes of people who streamed into the town at dawn on the last day of the trial, and even fought with the police for entrance to the Court-house—all these circumstances combined, not perhaps to render the tragedy more impressive, but to add to the excitement of the scene. Few people, however, are likely to differ from the verdict. The facts themselves are simple enough. Birchall, a young Englishman of the upper-middle class, having failed to distinguish himself at Oxford, went out to Canada to make his living by farming. In the autumn of last year he opened negotiations by letter with an English gentleman of the name of Benwell, stating that he

was then in possession of a farm in Ontario, and that he wished for a partner to join him. Ultimately Mr. Benwell decided to send out his son to learn farming on the terms which Birchall proposed. The younger Benwell accordingly arrived in America, took up his quarters with Birchall and his wife, and, within a short time of his arrival, was found dead in a swamp not far from the Niagara Falls. The arrest of Birchall on a charge of murdering his friend and pupil followed, and, after a long and sensational trial, he has been found guilty of the crime.

The peculiar villiany of the transaction lies in the consideration, which it is difficult to resist, that Birchall deliberately formed the scheme of decoying young men from England on the pretence of teaching them farming, in order to murder them on their arrival, to conceal their deaths from their relatives in England, and to live on the remittances sent to them from home. One hopes, for the sake of human nature, that this theory may not be true. But it seems to be borne out by two significant facts. As soon as Benwell arrived, Birchall began to practise imitating his signature, and after his death he wrote to Mr. Benwell in England, asking for money, and wantonly stated that in future young Benwell intended to write his letters home with a typewriter and not with his own hand. The evidence on which Birchall was condemned alleged this motive for his action, and that theory the jury apparently believed. Apart from the question of motive, and apart from the fact that one or two small articles belonging to the dead man were found in Birchall's possession, the case for the prosecution turned on the question of identity alone. Witness after witness was called to prove the identity of Birchall with the companion in whose company the murdered man was last seen, walking, on the 17th February, towards the lonely swamp where his corpse was found four days later. Some of these witnesses were shaken in cross-examination, but the weight of their testimony decided the case. The weakness of the defence, moreover, tended to confirm the charge. The theatrical conduct of the counsel for the defence could scarcely have commanded sympathy, and the theory on which he rested seemed continually to shift.

At one moment the defence seemed to be trying to prove that the murdered man was not Benwell; at another, that Birchall was seen at Woodstock at the very time when he was occupied elsewhere in carrying out his crime; at another, that the murder was committed later than the date alleged. The only consistent aim of the counsel for the defence seems to have been to discredit, somehow or other, the witnesses for the prosecution, and to protest, a little noisily, his own disbelief in his client's guilt. At any rate, the jury unanimously decided that none of the defences suggested was compatible with fact.

People have hesitated to believe in Birchall's guilt, partly because of the deep depravity which it implies, and partly because there is always a reluctance to believe a man of some standing and of good education capable of the worst form of crime. Unfortunately, this hideous story shows not that education lessens the probability of crime, but that it renders it easier, and its expedients more ingenious. What strikes one most is the quiet callousness of the murderer. It was not an act of savagery, or of personal spite, but rather the act of a man who, not otherwise repulsive or unamiable, had let himself drift into a position in which desperate courses seemed to him the easiest way of getting a living, and to those desperate courses he turned, without caring much what steps they

necessitated, and with sheer indifference to the guilt involved. It is the utter absence of a moral sense, the profound selfishness in the man, which impress one. Had any better means of subsistence offered, probably Birchall would not have contemplated crime. But as he had to make an income somehow, and this diabolical scheme occurred, he adopted it apparently as a matter of business, without any sense of remorse. Only an educated man who had taught himself to think anything allowable which might make his life more comfortable, and had long subordinated to that feeling every moral impulse in him, could have conceived and executed such a plan. One cannot help hoping under the circumstances that none of that sensibility towards extraordinary criminals which of late has been too often manifested in England will interpose between the convict and his punishment. The penalty to which he is condemned may be one which civilised nations ought to abolish; but while it exists, it should not be arbitrarily suspended because the criminal's station or depravity has made his trial the sensation of a week.

SOME PERSONAL NOTES FROM THE GERMAN MANŒUVRES.

AT the annual grand or Imperial manœuvres held each year in Germany, the Emperor is able to entertain many personal friends in a manner more agreeable and useful to both parties than at his official residence. The life one must perforce lead at field operations so serious and persistent as those of the German army, partakes largely of that in real war under the most favourable conditions of the quarter-master's department, and incidentally permits of much informal converse between men whose official relations might otherwise keep them prudently apart.

William II. is the first German Emperor to comprehend fully the power at his disposal in this respect, and to make full use of it. He does so in the fashion of a Hohenzollern—makes no pretensions in the way of show, invites his guests to share his fortunes in a "merry war," treats them frankly as comrades, gives them the best which the neighbourhood can supply, shows his genuine desire to furnish them an agreeable experience, and dismisses them with the conviction that in Germany at least monarchy is a real thing.

This year the conspicuous guests came from England: Admiral Hornby with two adjutants at the naval manœuvres on the Baltic, and the Duke of Connaught with a staff of four at the two manœuvres on the Russian border. As the Emperor speaks English fluently, the naval contingent suffered in nowise in their intercourse with their host, though as regards their fellow-guests it was at times awkward to have no German small talk at command. This was, however, never to my knowledge spoken of unkindly by any German officer, all other feelings being suppressed by those of satisfaction in having amongst them a sailor whom they so generously admired as the gallant Admiral.

The favourite compliment I heard was that he looked the Nelson from head to foot—cool, practical, self-possessed, simple, courteous: in short, the attributes which the German soldier prizes most highly for being those of his beloved Moltke. The likeness of Moltke to Hornby, by the way, is remarkable—at least, the Moltke of twenty years ago.

At a naval manœuvre covering a week's time, a good part of which was spent in the saddle with a large number of high naval officers from Austria as well as Germany, Admiral Hornby had opportunity to astonish his colleagues in a least expected manner. It was not much to remark that he rode better than any sailor in the field, for some of the

Austrians could not keep company with their mounts, let alone ride them. Officers in cavalry regiments repeatedly burst out in praise of the gallant admiral's riding; his easy hunting seat, the perfect understanding between the bit-end and the finger-end of his reins, the grace with which horse and rider lifted over the many fences and ditches that abound in that country—in fine, some went so far as to deplore the fact of his having gone into the navy, adding, "What a cavalry leader! Mein Gott!"

Moltke and Blumenthal came as spectators; the first now too old to appear in the saddle; the second still able to mount with difficulty. Both carry themselves like soldiers who have not aggravated the ravages of time by the follies of self-indulgence. Their skin is as clear as that of a child, and their manners as simple and hearty. Moltke lived aboard the *Hohenzollern*, and received at the Emperor's hands every attention which a father might expect from an affectionate son.

One morning at about half-past three our little steamer was approaching land in the neighbourhood of Düppel, on whose heights the Prussians fought the decisive and bloody battle that settled the war with Denmark in 1864. Blumenthal was chief of staff at that time, and to him, perhaps more than to any other one man, was due the splendid victory which Prussian arms achieved on that memorable day. Approaching this spot once more, and under such changed circumstances, his emotions must have been as deep as those of Wellington revisiting the field of Waterloo. His expression of these emotions was, however, characteristic of his dry yet genial nature. We were alone by the pilot-house. It was cold and dark, but not too dark to let me note the twinkle of his bright eyes as he said very slowly, looking me full in the face, "Twenty-six years ago we did some fighting here; and it was very hard work for us. We fought then with balls and bayonets; to-day they make me fight with a knife and fork." Then, after a musing pause, he continued, as drily as ever, "I think I prefer the old way!"

After the Baltic manœuvres, Admiral Hornby returned home; the Imperial headquarters hurried by special train to the Russian borders, and the Duke of Connaught made his appearance in a very becoming Hussar uniform. During the whole of his stay he was the recipient of unusual courtesy, and even his suite of four, of whom only one ventured to expose his acquaintance with German speech, were made to feel that even without words the brotherhood of the Germanic race could show itself in sympathy, if only by the clinking of a glass.

The Duke of Connaught looks soldier-like, and this in itself goes a long way in Germany to create a favourable first impression. The Prince of Wales was not equally successful on the occasion of his last visit, although his well-known good taste and charm of manner went far to make this point immaterial. It is a mistake to imagine that Germans seek only compliments for their military institutions. To be sure, they resent malevolent generalisations under this head—as who would not?—but nothing gives them greater pleasure than to discuss with officers of other countries differing methods of accomplishing the same result. They know their own shortcomings, and have by no means resigned themselves to the delusion that they have nothing more to learn. For this reason the presence of an English Prince, reputed in his own army as an officer of insight and force, meant to Germans a compliment of the most delicate kind. At this time, too, when the British army in India must feel prepared to take an active part in the next European war, it is of no small importance that such a soldier as the Duke of Connaught should be a witness to the splendid capacities of the modern German cavalry.

As keen a critic as the Duke was a guest from Russia, Colonel Zerpizky, the famous commander of

the Viborg Regiment, of which his Imperial host is honorary chief. The Russian colonel looks less than forty, bears in his face and manner every indication of physical courage and coolheadedness, and suggests strongly the late cavalry general of the American civil war, "Phil" Sheridan. It was of this regiment that the *Standard* concocted the silly tale that the German Emperor while at Narva was taken prisoner while attempting to lead it into an impossible position. Colonel Zerpizky is destined for a high command on the outbreak of war, and it would be hard to name another living man who could say with him that he has spent eight years of his life in actual campaigning in the presence of the enemy. Naturally he was much solicited for the expression of an opinion on many of the operations of the German troops, but I doubt whether many of his questioners went away satisfied. The Russian was either too well bred or too diplomatic to say more than what might pass for the compliment of a generous spectator. But many a time did I hear one of the foreign attachés present remark, "I wish I knew what that Russian really thinks!"

The presence of the Emperor of Austria was of course of the greatest interest to Germany, as emphasising still further the warm friendship binding the courts of Berlin and Vienna; nor did the German Emperor lose a single opportunity of making his Austrian guest feel the genuineness of his protestations. What this means will be better appreciated by such as can compare the meeting of this year with similar occasions in past seasons.

The German Emperor himself was in the best of health, and had such colour in his cheeks as he has not had in many a long day. He receives in his own country so much tawdry flattery from papers that have been trained in the Bismarckian conception of official journalism that anything that can be said of him by an independent observer must perforce seem tame.

His most striking peculiarity, as he moves about a room conversing with the different people that claim his attention, is the intensity with which he penetrates into their thoughts, the instinct that guides him to their best source of knowledge, the rapid manner in which he extracts the valuable portion of what may be said, the charming haphazard way in which the conversation seems to have been conducted, and the universally satisfied feeling which he manages to leave behind in the minds of those with whom he has been in contact. Royal conversation is usually of the most ordinary quality, for the reason that princes are rarely brought up to think for themselves, much less act with a sense of the responsibility resting upon them. This German Emperor has in his eyes, when talking, a look that devours the intellect of the one he is addressing—and at such times he is the living picture of Frederick the Great.

In the field, however his mind is working within itself, his eyes appear resting; his attitude is that of one absorbed in studying out some problem with earnestness, but an earnestness quite different from that which shows in the bright chat of the drawing-room. Measured by almost any standard, he shows unmistakable signs of a capacity for doing great things, and it would surprise me to hear of one who has not drawn the same conclusion after watching him for a few hours.

It is more than six months since Bismarck retired from office because the Emperor declined to assume the rôle of the early Mikados. If argument were needed to support the statements I have made, it would be sufficient perhaps to point to the fact that in those six months not only has the Emperor committed no serious blunder: he has done nothing to make the prospect of war more imminent; he has created, on the contrary, amongst Germans of all political shades a disposition to assist him in carrying on the government, a disposition which Bismarck had almost eradicated, at least amongst those of Liberal tendencies. Finally, he has once more shown our

hero-worshippers that no one man, not even a Bismarck, is irreplaceable, and that, instead of fighting Socialism and other intellectual heresies with the policeman's club, he is prepared to draw to his assistance the co-operation of all citizens, irrespective of party. He admits, in short, that public opinion in Germany is worth cultivating, and this admission is worth the loss of many Bismarcks.

POULTNEY BIGELOW.

A DISTINCTIVE AMERICAN INSTITUTION.

IN the course of my wanderings over the earth I have chanced more than once on a distinctive American Institution, which, with insular perversity, I could not at first understand or appreciate, but have since learnt to know and to value. In the north-west corner of New York State, on a lake fourteen hundred feet above the sea, larger than our own Windermere, but with a suggestion of its soft and cultivated beauty, stands a Summer City. This city is a sort of parable in wood, a world of ideas embodied in forms that fitly express the transience of the phenomenal. It is full of structures with classic names, though they are no classic structures. It has an Athenæum, an Amphitheatre capable of seating over five thousand persons, a Hall of Philosophy, a College of Liberal Arts, a Normal College, Schools of Art and of Music, a Gymnasium, a Museum with some excellent casts of ancient Oriental antiquities, photographs of Greek and Roman sculptures, and various survivals of older civilisations.

For ten months of the year this city is deserted; never a footfall echoes through its forlorn streets, or voice sounds in its forsaken amphitheatre; but for the other two all its houses and halls are crowded, and the whole is a scene of the most varied activities and interests. Professors from the most famous of the American Universities, school-masters from the remotest and most recent Western as from the oldest and busiest Eastern towns, parsons of all churches and every quality of culture, judges and lawyers of every shade in politics, Sunday-school teachers and every class of moral and social reformers, come hither and mingle with every variety of the holiday-maker, the tourist, the seeker of rest and change of air. The place is a sort of academic and philanthropic microcosm floating in an atmosphere of recreation. The College of Liberal Arts is occupied by learned professors, some of whom have a reputation, not only American, but European; and audiences, often strangely unlike those that throng their class-rooms, assemble to hear them discuss subjects so dissimilar as Hebrew and Social Economics, the Literature of Greece and Geology, Mathematics and German, Modern History and Theology. School masters and mistresses have lessons in pedagogy, see model classes conducted, and hear lectures on the subjects in which they feel themselves most deficient, or have most interest. The intelligent person not sure of his own ignorance and anxious to know something of everything can indulge himself to the uttermost. The young miss with a taste for music can have lessons from the distinguished Master who has come from the great city for the combined purposes of tuition and entertainment; if she inclines rather to wood-carving or modelling in clay or painting, she can have instruction in any or all of these. The parson who finds himself an exile in some unsettled Western or rude Southern parish, where books, or the society that is even better than books, are alike impossible, is able to refresh his thirsty soul as with draughts of living water, and can hear the famed preacher or the learned divine, and discuss the always anxious, though not always great, problems that perplex or exercise him with men more centrally if not more happily placed than himself. The student or college boy, or boy from city or country, who has the